New York, New York Public Library, Spencer Collection, NYPL Spencer 033

Description: ff. vi + 78 + vi - Bound in tanned calf with a matching box, by NYPL in 1937; previous (original?) binding in green velvet with brass bosses in the centers of both covers. - Jacques d'Armagnac. Arms f. 3, attributed to Claude, seigneur de Vissac (1415 - 1476). Dr. Thomas Hobart (d. 1728), Cambridge. Mostyn sale, Sotheby's, 13 July 1920 to Sabin. The'ophile Belin, 1926; sold at wife's auction. Purchased for Spencer, 1936. - De Ricci, 1342. Dict. Cat., 902. Bibliothe`que de Mme. Th. Belinn. 4 (1936) 7-23. R. Friedman, "Il Codice Spencer 33..." Studi sul Boccaccio20 (1991-2) 3-17. C. Bozzolo, Manuscrits des traductions franc$aises...(1973) 181-182. - Jonathan J. G. Alexander, James H. Marrow and Lucy Freeman Sandler, The Splendor of the Word: Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the New York Public Library(London / Turnhout: The New York Public Library / Harvey Miller Publishers, 2005) n. 98.

Notes:-Leaves have been removed from the manuscript. The 78 folios are preceded and followed by two vellum folios and four paper folios.

Acknowledgments: - We thank Prof. Brigitte Buettner for her extensive work towards the present description of this manuscript.

Number of Parts: 1 - *Number of Images Available:* 78

Direct Link: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/NYPLSpencer033_42

Language: French *Country:* France *Century:* 15th

Part 1: ff. 1-78v

Description: - Parchment - 405 x 286 mm - 46 lines per page in two columns, ruled in black or red ink. Some signatures survive.

Country: France

Cardinal point:

Region:

City: Paris?

Assigned Date: s. XV$^{3/4}$

Searchable Date Range: 1450 - 1475

Dated by scribe: No

Inscribed Date:

Document: No

Number of Scribes: ;

Script: Ba^tarde

Artist(s): Maître François, follower of

Figurative Decoration: 76 miniatures (one at beginning of each chapter), in which the main personnages are often labeled in gold.

Other Decoration: Floreate border on pages with miniatures. Illuminated blue and red 4-line initials on gold fields open each chapter. Rubrics.

Notes: Produced ca 1460-70 in Paris or the Ile-de-France, originally with 105 miniatures; when sold at auction in 1920, it had 95 leaves and 93 miniatures (now reduced to 78 leaves and 76 miniatures); present location is known for 7 of the missing 29 miniatures. Latin

Number of Texts: 1

Text 1: ff. 1-78v

Author: Giovanni Boccaccio

Title: De cleres et nobles femmes

Title: Cy commence le livre qui feist Iehan bocace de certalde des cleres et nobles femes lequel il envoye a andree des actiorales de florence ce comtesse de haulteville; le premier chapitre ou quel est mis le prohesme.

Language(s): French

Incipit: Devant hier moy estant ung petit distrait et separe du simple et mains expert peuple et bien pres despeche de toutes autres cures

Notes: De claris mulieribusin an anonymous French translation known in 3 other mss; f. 78r-v contains a list of the 104 chapters.



f. 1 The author in a gothic chamber, asleep with pen in hand, a book open on a lectern, and other books scattered around, as a cat chases a mouse across the floor.

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f. 3 The creation of Eve from the body of the sleeping Adam, with God in papal robes, all set in a garden surrounded by walls. Full border with grotesques and the Vissac coat of arms supported by mermaids and wildmen.

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f. 4 Semiramis on horseback, in full armor, with head bare, leading an army against Babylon, which is shown as a castle defended by crossbowmen.

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f. 5v In a gothic setting, a pedestal displays a golden statue of Opis (also called Rhea) who is worshipped by a group of noblemen and women, while lying on the floor in the foreground is the gold but blood-splattered stone representing the goddess.

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f. 6 Workers constructing a gothic temple to Juno, featuring a golden statue of the goddess; in the background, a group of worshippers kneel before a statue of the goddess.

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f. 7 Farmers ploughing a field with oxen, and harvesting grain, as Ceres, accompanied by three ladies, approaches; in the background, worshippers pray to statue of the goddess.

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f. 8 Minerva observing two men weaving; in the background, in a chapel to Minerva, a statue of the goddess in full armor with winged helmet, with a lance and a shield showing the head of Medusa, and an owl perched at her feet.

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f. 9 Venus enthroned as Queen of Cyprus, beneath a red canopy, surrounded by couples at play; to the left, in a temple, worshippers around a statue of goddess; ships in harbor with couples on the seaside.

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f. 10 Isis inscribing book of laws amidst a group of farmers who hoe, dig and seed the field; the goddess Io adored in her temple at Rome; Io's ship with its sail furled.

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f. 10v Jupiter's messenger selects the young Europa, as she struggles against the soldier who overcomes her, with two grinning bulls nearby; a ship in the sea bears the emblem of the white bull; Europa worshipped in Tarentum.

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f. 11v Pyramus and Thisbe conversing through a wall of the castle; as Pyramus sleeps, Thisbe stabbing herself by the fountain and the tomb of Ninus.

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f. 13 Hypermnestra in a prison cell; Linus, her husband, and three men murder Danaus, her father; Hypermnestra's sister murders her husband in bed; in the background, cathedral town and clock tower.

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f. 14 Group of worshippers at statue of Latona, as Niobe, dressed as a queen, stands apart, trying to sway people from their worship; Niobe mourning over the corpses of her husband, Amphion, and her children.

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f. 15 Hypsipyle enthroned in public square, before her husband's supposed pyre, with armed women slaying men; Hypsipyle sold to pirates by Lycurgus; Hypsipyle and Lycurgus on boats.

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f. 16 Medea and Jason supervising the dismemberment of Medea's brother; Medea presents their dead children to Jason; the palace of Creon in flames, with the royal family inside.

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f. 17 Arachne at her loom, her colored yarns in a box beside her, surrounded by men, with scene of lovers on tapestry and female figure on bare warp threads; Arachne hung by a rope in a bare gray chamber.

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f. 18 Orithya holds scepter to Hercules, who in exchange offers her sister, Menalippe with her hands tied; armies of Athenians and Amazons charge each other; empty warships of Hercules docked in the harbor.

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f. 18v The Sibyl Erythraea, wearing a blue gown, turning the page of her book on the lectern next to a golden altar decorated with icons and books; many shelves with ornately clasped books are behind her.

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f. 19v Nessus (as a man on horseback, not as a centaur) pierced by the arrow of Hercules following his attempt to abduct Deianira, who takes the tunic covered in the centaur's blood; a servant presents the tunic to Hercules in his bedroom.

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f. 20 Marriage of Jocasta and Oedipus on the steps of a gothic church; Jocasta appears to argue with Oedipus; Jocasta's and Oedipus' sons, Eteocles and Polynices, go to battle in the presence of their sisters.

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f. 20v The Cumean Sibyl (Amalthea) as she presents the last three sibylline books to Tarquin, King of Rome, seated on a throne, who offers a gold ball to the Sibyl in exchange for the books.

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f. 21 Nicostrata (Carmente) and her son, Evander approaching the masons constructing the walls of Rome; in the distance, two ships approach on the Tiber. The miniature omits depiction of Nicostrata's invention of Latin alphabet.

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f. 22 Pamphila and two servants gather silkworms from trees, with walled city in background; Pamphila making silk thread while the servants card and wind it.

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f. 22v The murder of Rhea Ilia's brother Lausus by her uncle Amulius, while Rhea Ilia watches; Rhea Ilia, dressed as nun, in bed, with newborn Romulus and Remus; Rhea Ilia buried alive, while wolf suckles twins; murder of Numitor, her uncle.

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f. 23v Gaia Cyrilla in a chamber, wearing a crown, seated before a fireplace, spinning wool on a wheel, while a servant cards the wool.

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f. 24 Sappho plucking the strings of a harp in a rich room with a psalter and a zither on a table top before her, and books, bound and clasped, stored under a table and on a ledge.

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f. 25 Lucretia lying in a blue-starred canopy bed, while Sextus approaches with his sword raised; Lucretia stabs herself in the chest with a dagger, while Collatinus is prevented from coming to her aid.

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f. 26 Tents of Scythians attacked by the army of Cyrus, while the Scythian army approaches in the distance; Thamyris stands over Cyrus, who is about to be beheaded by a soldier.

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f. 27 Leaena lies on a table in a torture chamber, bound by feet and wrists to cords drawn through rings on walls, as attendents rack her, and two cowled me stand apart; Leaena spits her tongue at one of them rather than revealing names.

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f. 28 Athaliah, crowned, orders the murder of the male children of the line of David; coronation of Jehoash (?labeled Ahaziah, his father's name) by two bishops; three citizens observe over a wall, as the body of Athaliah is dragged from the castle by her hair.

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f. 29v Cloelia and other maidens fleeing on horseback across the Tiber from Rome, while on the far side of the city, soldiers with canons prepare a siege.

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f. 31 Thamyris seated before an easel in an urban square, painting a portrait of Diana; the finished portrait is visible on an altar through the window of a church in the middle distance.

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f. 31v A golden sarcophagus being erected, with a stone cutter incising the letters, as the monument of Mausoleus, while Artemesia observes the work; the fleet of ships from Rhodes comes to attack Halicarnassus and Artemesia defends Halicarnassus.

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f. 33 Leontia in a courtyard, studying a book propped up on a lectern before her with other bound books scattered around; in middle distance, groups of courtesans and customers.

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f. 33v Olympia under a canopy in a public square, having given birth to Alexander; the murder of Arridaeus and Eurydice; the murder of Olympia by a soldier. A clock or sundial on the tower in the background.

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f. 34v Claudia's father arriving in the Capitol, with an entourage, when a younger man attacks his carriage and Claudia (a vestal virgin) dressed as a nun, approaches the man, threatening him with a golden rod.

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f. 35 Virginia, married to a plebian, is expelled from the temple of Pudicitia by a group of women; Virginia directs three workman constructing tower of temple of Pudicitia, with two working on the roof, and a third cutting a block of stone.

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f. 35v Flora practicing prostitution with a customer; the Floral Games consisting of nude dancing girls watched by noble and plebeian men and women spectators.

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f. 36v The young Roman woman, representing Caritas, giving milk from her breast to her condemned mother, while the jailer, holding the key, observes them through a barred window.

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f. 37v Marcia before an easel, painting her self-portrait with a small mirror reflects the image of her face; in the background, two painted portraits and three sculptures of female figures.

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f. 38 Sulpicia on the steps of an open gothic temple, applauded by a crowd of women and men with the golden statue of Venus Verticordia, holding a lance, visible in the apse behind her.

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f. 39 Harmonia kneeling in a hexagonal chamber beside the corpse of a girl slain in her stead, and accepting the blows and stabs of two soldiers.

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f. 39v Busa gazing heavenward as she holds a golden veil out to cloth a man wearing only a shirt, while two men watch; two hungry men approach a table set with food, and two other men clasp hands; all are Romans escaping Hannibal.

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f. 40v The betrothal of Sophonisba to Syphax; Syphax alone and bereft; Sophonisba stands before a kneeling figure and drinks from a poisoned chalice.

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f. 42 Theoxena and Poris exiting Thessalonica with children and belongings; Theoxena, Poris and children, on a boat near the shore, commit suicide, as a ship full of Macedonian soldiers pursues them.

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f. 43 Berenice, crowned, standing in chariot whose wheel rests on the corpse of Caeneus who murdered her sons; Berenice grieving over the body of her son.

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f. 44 A group of Roman soldiers advancing on the retreating Galatians; Roman centurion's rape of the wife of Orgiago; she slices his throat while a soldier weighs ransom money she is pretending to pay; she offers the severed head held in her skirt to Orgiago.

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f. 45 Wedding of Aemilia's slave girl to a freeman in a gothic interior as a tonsured cleric performs the ceremony.

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f. 45v Dripetrua riding sidesaddle on a white horse, wearing a rose dress with gold highlights, escorted by soldiers and nobles in armor; the artist has not portrayed her deformity.

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f. 46 Sempronia defending herself against Equitius before the Roman magistrate, as she reads from a book open on a lectern.

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f. 47 Claudia Quinta hauling a rope attached to a golden ship that carries the marble statue of a goddess, with a group of men and women watching from across the harbor.

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f. 47v Roman archers surrounding and attacking the palace chamber where Mithridates, Hypsicratea, and three others are drinking poison from chalices and falling to the ground.

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f. 49 Sempronia displaying her skill in rhetoric before three noblemen who applaud her; Sempronia dancing with five men in a village square at dusk, while a second woman plays a long wind instrument.

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f. 50 Julia, dressed in pink and gold, recoiling in horror from kneeling man who presents Pompeii's bloody robe.

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f. 50v Portia punturing her left arm at the joint with a knife, while Brutus, her husband, looks on in amazement; Portia kneels before a raging fireplace, placing a hot coal in her mouth when she learns of Brutus' death.

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f. 51v Curia and Quintus Lucretius and a female attendant in a private chamber, with Lucretius' hiding place visible; Curia, feigning grief, approaches townpeople crowded together in a town square.

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f. 52 Portrait of Mariamne and Aristobolus shown by kneeling man to royal couple; Mariamne, naked except for a crown, engulfed by flames at the stake as townspeople look on.

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f. 53v Cleopatra and Antony seated at a banquet table, touching hands; Cleopatra stands next to Antony's golden sepulchre and is bitten by asps; Cleopatra in Alexandria, kneeling before Octavian in supplication.

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f. 56 Antonia in her widowhood at a spinning wheel while female attendants card and wind the wool.

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f. 56v Agrippina lashed to a golden table by a male figure, while Tiberius, in a conical crown, stands by with a raised sword; a man tries to force Agrippina to eat; another is lifting a jug from the floor.

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f. 57v Mundus (pretending to be Anubis) and Paulina embracing in bed in the temple of Isis; Mundus reveals his identity at the temple gate; the priest is stabbed as Tiberius looks on.

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f. 58v Agrippina wed to Claudius; Agrippina sharing throne with her son Nero; Agrippina rescued from drowning by two men; in medical theater, a man slits open her body as Nero watches to observe the womb that bore him.

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f. 60v Epicharis being racked by two men as Nero and Proculus watch; two men standing at the feet of dead Epicharis, who has strangled herself to keep from revealing names.

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f. 61v Seneca, lying dead in the bloody water of his tub, his arm hanging over the side; Pompeia, still alive, is held in her tub of water by two men, as the blood begins to flows out of her arm, and she looks towards her husband, Seneca.

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f. 62v The wedding of Poppaea and a young man; the wedding of Nero and Poppaea, performed by a bishop; Nero, holding a sword, kicks the pregnant Poppaea to death.

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f. 63v The bloody slaughter inside a walled city, with Triaria prominent among the mounted warriors fighting the partisans of Vespasian.

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f. 64v Proba studying at her desk, seated on a blue throne, under a gothic canopy, leafing through a book on a lectern; other books are visible.

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f. 65v Faustina lying naked and smiling in bed, as an attendent rubs her down with the blood of her dead lover; Faustina, wearing a crown, stands before Aurelius, a priest, and others; Aurelius observing the construction of temple.

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f. 66v Semiamira as a prostitute; Semiamira at the side of her son, the emperor; Semiamira with three seated ladies, as the Women's Senate; Semiamira and Elagabalus murdered on their thrones.

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f. 67v Warring factions of Romans and Palmirians represented by a joust scene; procession into Rome, with Zenobia as a black queen paraded before the emperor as a prisoner.

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f. 69v Pope Joan, who has just given birth to an infant during a Church procession near a round building (representing the Colosseum?), with the infant on the ground and Joan kneeling before it, her arms raised in praise, as cardinals, priest, and crowd observe.

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f. 70v The Empress Irene, seated on a hexagonal raised platform, condemning her son, Constantine, to prison, as he is restrained by two men, one of whom has his hands at Constantine's mouth.

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f. 71v The wedding of Enguldrada and Guido, as the emperor, wearing splendid armor, and other nobles observe.

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f. 72v The newborn Constance being given to the monastery; the religious devotion of Constance as she stands by an altar, in her nun's habit, reading; Constance wedded to Emperor Henry VI by the Pope; the birth of Frederick II.

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f. 73v Camiola of Siena pays the ransom to free Roland, natural son of Frederick of Sicily, from prison; she delivers an oration to the ecclesiastical judge, who sits on a throne, attended by nobles.

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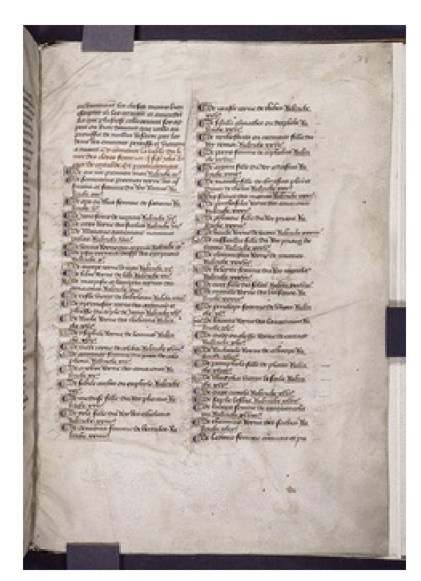
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f. 76v Joanna in majesty, flanked by a council of scholars; five corpses hanging from the gallows outside a walled city, as a group of archers and soldiers approach. Initial not completed (gold ground only, lacking the painted colors).

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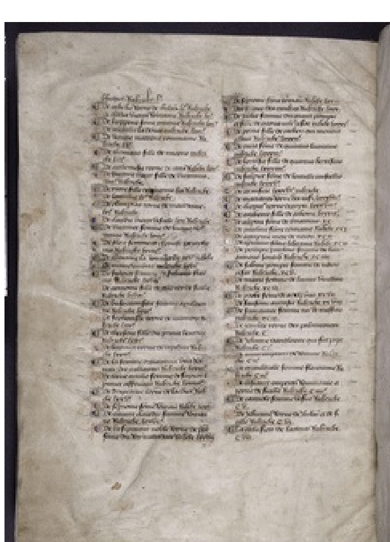
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f. 78 Beginning of the chapter list.

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f. 78v Explicit of the chapter list.

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